

Interchange Area Plan

Description

An interchange area plan is a combination of a transportation plan and a land use plan that addresses interchange function and associated development of areas adjacent to the connecting roadway system. These plans are structured to address access and mobility needs while protecting or enhancing land use in the interchange areas. This is done by ensuring land use plans are compatible with the capacity and operation of the roadway system.

More specifically, interchange area plans serve the following purposes:

- Care for the major infrastructure facilities (state and local)
- Protect interchanges from unexpected or undesired development
- Manage and monitor existing capacity
- Establish future land use plans to guide desired development
- Evaluate and balance interstate and local traffic
- Improve safety for all modes of transportation
- Address environmental resources and protection
- Plan for future improvements and increased capacity of transportation systems

An interchange area plan should be completed whenever a new interchange is proposed and constructed, when major modifications are made to existing interchanges, or when major functionality and land use issues arise at existing interchanges. The Federal Highway Administration has established specific study requirements for proposals to construct or modify interchanges on the Interstate highway system. These studies, called Interchange Justification (IJ) Studies, are designed to protect the function of the Interstate system. To evaluate associated land use changes, there should be close coordination between the local planning authorities and the state transportation department.

There are five major elements to an interchange area plan. These elements provide background information, analysis, and recommendations for the interchange area.

- **Purpose and Background:** This section provides a purpose statement and defines the area, context, problems, and goals and objectives for the proposed or current interchange.
- **Existing Conditions Analysis:** This section presents the current inventory of the interchange area and analyzes information such as existing land uses, traffic patterns and counts, and natural features.
- **Future Conditions Analysis:** This section predicts what future development patterns will occur and how it will affect the functional traffic operations.
- **Development Alternatives:** This section develops different alternatives for roadway enhancements and proposes different land use development options as various situations arise in the interchange area.
- **Adoption and Implementation:** This section presents how the plan is adopted and includes implementation actions for individual agencies to carry out for the plan to be effective.

Relevant Statutes

- There are not statutory requirements for interchange area plans.

Capacity Recommendations

An effective interchange area plan involves traffic engineering, highway design engineering and land use planning. It is usually necessary to hire a planning consultant to provide all of these services in a coordinated way. A planning staff is not required, but it is helpful to have at least one staff person to oversee the project.

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Guidelines / Considerations for Implementation

- Local zoning and plans must be consistent and compliment the functions of the interchange.
- There should be close communication and coordination between the local and state transportation planning authorities.
- There should be public involvement with affected property owners and local users of the transportation system.

Example Ordinances

No example ordinances are available for this tool.

Example Studies

- **City of Sublimity Interchange Area Management Plan – Oregon:** This interchange plan documents the land use and transportation strategies developed to enhance the function of the interchange at Oregon 22 and Cascade Highway. Interchange Area Plan: http://www.co.marion.or.us/NR/ronlyres/02B44EB7-491B-472F-8B9B-ECC3514AB25B/3254/Sublimity_IAMP_Final_Draft.pdf
- **City of Meridian Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan – Idaho:** A recently completed Interchange Area Plan in Idaho, this Plan's website has provided a lot of the material that went into forming the Interchange Area Plan, as well as providing the adopted Final Plan document.

Website for the Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan: http://www.ci.meridian.id.us/planning_zoning/ten_mile_interchange_specific_area_plan/index.asp

Final Plan Document:

<http://www.ci.meridian.id.us/admin/sitebuilder/preview.asp?action=Preview&SiteID=125&PageID=1428>

- **I-74/US 421 Greensburg Area Transportation Improvement Project:** This is a six-part project to increase the capacity of the I-74/US 421 interchange area for anticipated growth from a new Honda automobile manufacturing facility. <http://www.in.gov/dot/projects/i74greensburg/index.html>

Helpful References and Links

- **Wisconsin Department of Transportation – A Guide for Community Planning in Interchange Areas:** This document is a comprehensive guide to planning specifically around an interchange. It contains information about challenges, approaches, processes and implementation. <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/docs/interchange-guide.pdf>
- **Oregon Department of Transportation - Interchange Area Management Plan Guidelines:** This guide provides a great overview of an interchange area plan and has several case studies and two implementation examples for further reading. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/docs/publications/iampGuidelines.pdf>

Helpful Contacts

No Helpful Contacts have been identified for this tool.

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Other Possible Funding Sources

- **Tax Increment Financing:** This tool establishes a process for a community to use property taxes within a defined boundary for a certain period of time to make specific improvements to that area.
- **Local Improvement District:** This tool sets up a process to collect money from taxes and fees on new development within a specified district to be used to make improvements to roads and other public facilities. It works best in areas that have not yet been developed.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** This tool is effective in areas where a private owner or a public agency cannot fund the project alone. When both parties would benefit, the costs of the improvements are shared.

Program Objectives and Issues Addressed

- Growth Management
- General Planning
- Transportation/Infrastructure

See Also

- Tax Increment Financing
- Access Management Plan and Policies
- Areawide Throughfare Plan